

**MEDIA RELEASE: Number Of Playford Residents Forced On Income Management Continues To Rise, Time For Nick Champion To Respond To The Evidence**

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Latest data from the Department of Social Services reveals the number of Income Management clients in Playford continues to rise. As of August 29 there were 624 clients in Playford – an increase of six percent over the previous figure of 588 as of May 16.

The majority of Income Management clients in Playford are forced on the program, not volunteers, as often claimed. 83 percent of Playford residents on Income Management are forced clients. Only 106 of 624 clients are volunteers.

Of the 518 residents forced on Income Management, 98 percent, or 508, were young people on Income Management solely because of their age and payment type, not because of their personal or financial circumstances, history, or skills.

SIMPla (Stop Income Management in Playford) Spokesperson Pas Forgione said, “In Playford, Income Management is largely operating as a blanket measure, with large numbers of young people having control of their funds restricted, despite no history of mismanaging their payments or personal crisis. Many of these people study and work part-time.”

“Most of them are subject to Income Management simply because they receive the Unreasonable To Live At Home rate of Youth Allowance and are aged 16-21, but this is no justification for these people being deprived of full control over their money.”

“According to the Abbott Government's *Place Based Income Management – Process And Short Term Outcomes Evaluation*, there has been no evidence of strengthened money-management skills, better health outcomes, or reduced alcohol and tobacco consumption among those forced on Income Management.”

“Interestingly, the evaluation suggests those who volunteered often were more financially and personally vulnerable than those forced on the scheme.”

“The evaluation is consistent with past studies that show that the policy, with its enormous cost of \$4,000-\$6,000 per person, per year, and over \$1 billion spent nationwide since 2007, is not working, and wasting resources that could fund education, employment, and health support services.”

“After over two years of Income Management, it is time for Wakefield MP Nick Champion, who lobbied, without proper consultation, former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to make Playford an Income Management area, to respond to the evidence.”

“Does Mr Champion still endorse this scheme that is failing to achieve positive outcomes for those required to participate? Does Mr Champion still endorse this scheme that is affecting large numbers of young people regardless of their financial and personal status?”

Despite requests, Mr Champion himself has not met with SIMPla to discuss the progress of the Playford Income Management program.

“While Mr Champion may now be an Opposition backbencher, he still bears significant responsibility for this heavy-handed policy being introduced to Playford. He owes the community – and those forced on Income Management – an explanation. He needs to clarify where he stands now on this scheme”, Mr Forgione said.